

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-26 were originally filed in the application filed on November 21, 2003. The RCE mailed on June 19, 2006 canceled Claims 1-26 and added new Claims 27-60. The Amendment mailed on February 23, 2007 canceled Claims 33, 36, 45, 48, 56, and 59. In the August 27, 2007 Amendment, Applicants canceled Claims 27-32, 34-35, 37-44, 46-47, 49-55, 57-58, and 60 and added new Claims 61-84. In the present Amendment, Applicants have amended Claims 64, 65, 67, 68, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 80, 81, 83, and 84 to correct formal matters. As such, no new matter was entered. Upon entry of the present Amendment, Claims 61-84 are pending.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of rejection in view of the following remarks.

A. Information Disclosure Statement

The seventeen-page information disclosure statement, submitted on November 18, 2007, contained references generally directed to studs, nuts, and washers. Applicants encourage the Examiner to consider the seventeen-page information disclosure statement.

In response to the Examiner's Office Action of 11-27, 2007, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the three-page information disclosure statement, submitted on November 18, 2007. The three-page information disclosure statement contained references generally directed to bolts and screws. Applicants further request that the references therein be made of record and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

B. Double Patenting

Claims 61-84 were provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting. The Examiner alleged that Claims 61-84 are not patentably distinct over the claims of U.S. Application No. 10/430,794, now U.S. Patent No. 7,334,975, and the claims of copending U.S. Application No. 11/444,672. Without agreeing to the merits of the Examiner's rejection, and in order to expedite prosecution of the pending application,

Applicants submit herewith terminal disclaimers against U.S. Patent No. 7,334,975 and U.S. Patent Application No. 11/444,672.

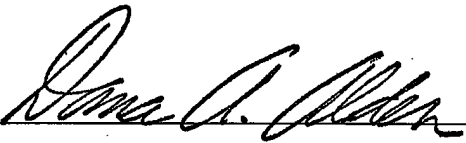
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration, withdrawal of rejections, and allowance of all Claims now present in the application.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required fees, including any extension and/or excess claim fees, any additional fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 502318.

Dated: April 28, 2008

Respectfully Submitted,

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